



STATE OF VERMONT
Department of Education
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Department Amends List of Vermont's 'Lowest Achieving' Schools

MONTPELIER – On March 10, 2010, the Vermont Department of Education released the list of Vermont's ten "persistently low-achieving schools" as required by the U.S. Department of Education (USED). Due to a calculation error at the department, that list was incorrect. Two schools that were classified have been removed, and two schools that were not on the March 10 list have now been added.

A federal regulation from USED requires states to rank all schools identified for not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) who received Title I funds¹ in 2008 and all secondary schools eligible for but not receiving Title I funds in 2008. Once ranked, the lowest-achieving five schools in each category are eligible to receive federal funding as part of the Statewide Fiscal Stabilization Fund allocations under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The two schools removed from this classification were Otter Valley Union High School and Bridport Elementary School. The two schools now eligible for increased federal aid are St. Johnsbury School and Lamoille Union High School.

Commissioner Armando Vilaseca released the following statement:

"I sincerely apologize for this mistake. In making these complicated calculations to identify these schools, one element of a calculation was not included and therefore we mistakenly identified two schools. This was human error, nothing more. This error has caused both individuals and communities much concern and angst, and I take full responsibility for that. My department staff is incredibly hard working, dedicated to getting things right, and strained to meet the enormity of federal requirements like this one that are being placed on our already reduced team.

"The important thing is that we do everything we can to get this federal aid to the schools that need it the most. This is an incredible opportunity to support these schools in making big changes to help all their students succeed."

The USED has allocated \$8 million in additional school improvement funding for Vermont. Vermont's Department of Education identified these high-need schools using the 2008 New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) scores for all students, and scores for those schools over the period that NECAP tests have been administered. An additional criterion for high schools was to identify any high school with graduation rates below 60 percent for two years or more. Vermont has no high schools (as of January 2010) in this category.

The funds do come with conditions. For Vermont's 10 highest-need schools to receive funds, they must be willing to embrace one of four strictly defined models for school improvement as laid out by the USED. The four models include closing the school, closing the school and reopening the school under a Charter or Education Management entity, replacing the principal

¹ Through Title I, the federal government disburses money to school districts based on the number of low-income families in each district as determined by census data.

and 50 percent of the teachers, or implementing a comprehensive 'transformation' model which would also necessitate replacing the principal (if they have been there longer than two years) while implementing systemic reform efforts in the coming years.

Explanation of Process Used to Identify Tier I, II & III Schools in Vermont

In response to receiving \$77 million in education stimulus aid for schools as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Vermont was required to rank all Title I schools that have been identified by our school accountability system of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and all schools that include the 9-12 grade span that are eligible but not receiving Title I funds on four indicators:

1. Proficiency of all students on 2008 NECAP (state assessment) in mathematics
2. Proficiency of all students on 2008 NECAP in reading
3. Progress of all students on NECAP reading over at least two years
4. Progress of all students on NECAP mathematics over at least two years

The department was required to calculate the sum of the four rankings for each school, and based on this combined ranking score was required to identify schools as falling into one of the following categories:

1. Tier I - the five highest need (lowest achieving based on the combined ranking score) Title I schools who are identified by Vermont's school accountability system (AYP)
2. Tier II – the five highest need (lowest achieving based on the combined ranking score) secondary schools (defined as schools inclusive of 9-12 span) who are eligible for but not receiving Title I
3. Tier III – schools in need of improvement (the rest of the Title I receiving schools identified by the AYP system)

All 68 schools identified as Tier I, II or III are eligible for additional school improvement funds and support from the department as part of the FY 2010/11 State School Improvement Grant Application once it is approved later this spring. First priority for funding and support will be given to participating Tier I & II schools.

The complete list of ranked schools follows.

Tier I, II and, III Rankings

School	Math Proficiency	Math Progress	Reading Proficiency	Reading Progress	Total	Tier
Mt. Abraham UHS #28	12	7	6	1	26	Tier II
Wheeler School	2	31	1	12	46	Tier I
Johnson Elementary School	25	8	9	9	51	Tier I
Rutland High School	3	13	30	5	51	Tier II
Northfield Elementary School	43	1	7	6	57	Tier I
Winooski High School	1	63	3	15	82	Tier I
St. Johnsbury Schools	31	12	10	39	92	Tier I
Windsor High School	11	11	72	11	105	Tier II
Fair Haven UHS #16	3	69	18	22	112	Tier II
Lamoille UHS #18	6	61	20	30	117	Tier II
Molly Stark School	23	29	14	56	122	Tier III
Bellows Falls Middle School	19	5	34	67	125	Tier III
Bennington Elementary School	32	43	11	41	127	Tier III
Mill River US #40	41	18	59	13	131	Tier III
Hyde Park Elementary School	45	30	8	51	134	Tier III
Rutland Intermediate School	74	10	26	24	134	Tier III
Putney Central School	51	6	48	35	140	Tier III
Bridport Central School	25	35	5	78	143	Tier III
Missisquoi Valley UHS #7	19	68	39	17	143	Tier III
Bristol Elementary School	54	28	14	48	144	Tier III
Westminster Schools	67	25	23	29	144	Tier III
Fair Haven Grade School	40	2	72	36	150	Tier III
J. F. Kennedy Elementary School	54	33	30	38	155	Tier III
Williamstown Middle/High School	16	40	44	58	158	Tier III
Duxbury/Waterbury Union #45	88	3	54	16	161	Tier III
Bakersfield School	27	44	22	71	164	Tier III
C. P. Smith School	79	16	44	25	164	Tier III
St. Albans City School	49	60	12	50	171	Tier III
Pownal Elementary School	57	46	37	33	173	Tier III
Highgate Elementary School	35	74	18	52	179	Tier III
J. J. Flynn School	74	21	43	44	182	Tier III
Malletts Bay School	93	15	69	7	184	Tier III
Enosburg Elementary School	81	24	37	47	189	Tier III
Lyndon Town School	48	45	33	65	191	Tier III
Lawrence Barnes School	6	91	2	93	192	Tier III
Lothrop School	81	34	50	28	193	Tier III
Bellows Free Academy (Fairfax)	83	22	59	31	195	Tier III
Academy School	65	52	26	54	197	Tier III
Williston Schools	94	9	80	14	197	Tier III
Milton Elementary School	91	27	41	40	199	Tier III
Peoples Academy Middle School	57	14	76	53	200	Tier III
Green Street School	45	39	39	77	200	Tier III
Barre City Elementary/Middle School	64	42	41	60	207	Tier III
Lyman C. Hunt Middle School	38	38	50	82	208	Tier III
Vergennes UES #44	69	54	30	59	212	Tier III
Northwest Primary School	71	50	17	75	213	Tier III
Shoreham Elementary School	35	89	4	90	218	Tier III
Champlain Elementary School	92	41	50	37	220	Tier III
Riverside Middle School	23	49	59	97	228	Tier III
Alburgh Community Education Center	49	80	12	89	230	Tier III
Rutland Middle School	57	83	26	66	232	Tier III
Middlebury ID #4 School	97	53	54	32	236	Tier III
Brattleboro Area Middle School #6	74	23	69	70	236	Tier III
Burke Town School	57	70	23	88	238	Tier III
Neshobe School	78	76	25	63	242	Tier III
Camels Hump Middle US #17	87	20	88	49	244	Tier III

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School	Math Proficiency	Math Progress	Reading Proficiency	Reading Progress	Total	Tier
Morristown Elementary Schools	88	37	63	57	245	Tier III
Swanton Schools	62	90	14	79	245	Tier III
Burlington Senior High School	13	84	66	85	248	Tier III
Union Street School	71	48	44	86	249	Tier III
Newport City Elementary Schools	86	47	63	55	251	Tier III
Derby Elementary School	83	58	59	61	261	Tier III
Park Street School	69	71	67	64	271	Tier III
North Country Union Junior UHS #22B	67	77	54	73	271	Tier III
Berkshire Elementary School	66	57	85	83	291	Tier III
Edmunds Middle School	85	73	69	69	296	Tier III
Winooski Middle School	32	92	81	96	301	Tier III
Windsor State Street School	74	81	72	87	314	Tier III